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STAR OF MYSORE

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Door-to-door drinking water delivery in remote city areas

MCC also designs exclusive water tax collection vehicles to recover dues worth Rs. 180 crore

Mysuru, June 19 (RK&BCT)- The Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) and its water supply wing Vani Vilas Water Works (VVWW) are ready with a project to supply door-to-door drinking water and also to levy pending water tax through Digitalised Point of Sale equipment. For this purpose, eight dedicated vehicles have been modified and readied.

A few areas in the city face perennial drinking water problem and there is neither a scope of establishing RO (Reverse Osmosis) plants nor supplying water daily as the roads are very narrow. Areas like Udayagiri, Shanthinagar, Kalyanagiri, Rajivnagar, Lingambudhipalya, Nachanahallipalya and surroundings of J.P. Nagar face perpetual drinking water problem.

Though the MCC supplies water to certain areas, the huge water supply vehicles could not reach the tail-end consumers due to bad and narrow lanes. Also, there are no designated places for the MCC to set up RO plants like they have established in other areas despite huge demand.

To ease the problem, the MCC has customised six Tata Ace Mega vehicles and have mounted mini RO plants on them. Each vehicle can carry 1,000 litres of pure drinking water to any nook and corner of Mysuru city and even criss-cross in the narrow lanes and bylanes. Door-to-door drinking water delivery is achieved through these vehicles and people can fill water to their containers at homes.

(See TAX on page 6)

SSLC exam: Parents collect Hall Tickets

Mysuru, June 19 (RK&DM)- The issuance of Hall Tickets for students appearing for SSLC exam (2019-20) began today. The exam is scheduled to take place from June 25 to July 4.

The exam, which was initially scheduled to take place from Mar. 27, was deferred by the Government in the wake of the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown.

However, as per the directions of the Education Department and DDPI, the Schools, as a safety measure, are issuing the admission tickets to the parents of students and the students themselves are refrained from visiting Schools as a precautionary measure.

The Schools have set up separate counters for issuing Hall tickets. The parents are informed over phone the time they have to come to the School for collecting the admission tickets of their wards and accordingly the parents are required to visit the Schools at the specified time and collect the Hall tickets.

Parents were seen visiting the Ideal Jawa Rotary School in city to collect the admission ticket. On the first day today, the School authorities under the guidance of Principal H.A. Veena and Secretary M.C. Manohar, completed the process by issuing Hall ticket to parents of all 105 students (including two repeaters).

The parents were advised to educate their children on maintaining COVID-19 regulation norms such as undergoing thermal screening, maintenance of physical distancing, use of hand sanitisers and wearing of face masks at the Exam Centres and to write the exam without any fear.

DDPI sources said that Schools have been instructed to distribute Hall tickets till June 23.

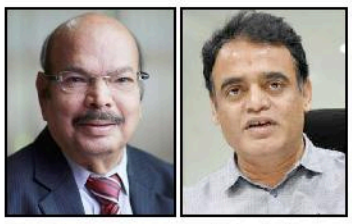
Cancel holidays on Jayantis

Educational Advisor tells Government

Bengaluru, June 19 (UNI)- The Karnataka Government has been advised by its Educational Advisor to cancel holidays observed in educational institutions on the occasion of various Jayantis (birth anniversaries).

Advisor to Karnataka Government on Education, Prof. M.R. Doreswamy has recommended cancellation of holidays on Jayantis and celebrate the day with more meaningful programmes remembering the great personalities.

The State Government has declared public holidays on Valmiki Jayanti, Basava Jayanti, Kanaka Jayanti, Mahavir Jayanti, Ambedkar Jayanti and Gandhi Jayanti.



Prof. Doreswamy *Dr. Ashwath Narayan*

Yesterday, Prof. Doreswamy submitted a report containing seven key suggestions including cancelling holidays, to Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C.N. Ashwath Narayan, who holds the Higher Education portfolio.

Prof. Doreswamy, in his report, suggested to hold thematic workshops, lectures, conferences and other such activities to celebrate the life and works of the great personalities, instead of declaring holidays.

"It would not only educate our youth about the significance of the great personalities to our culture and society but also reinvents the tradition of paying tributes to their contributions to our civil society," he said.

(See JAYANTIS on page 6)

STAR PUNCH By Satish Acharya

HC verdict on ownership of lands at foot of Chamundi Hill today

Mysuru, June 19 (OSR)- The Karnataka High Court will pronounce its verdict on the ownership of a few lands at the foot of Chamundi Hill under Kurubarahalli Survey Number 4, Alanahalli Survey Number 41 and Chowdalli Survey Number 39. The verdict will be out at 5 pm through video-conferencing.

There are vast lands in the area where the owners got the title deeds from the Maharajas of Mysore as royal gifts and now their descendants have approached the Court. Many people who have got land gifts from the Maharajas have built houses on the land and many of them have sold the lands to other private parties.

The issue reached the Court as eight years back the lands were declared as B-Kharab (Govt. land) by the then Mysuru Deputy Commissioner. Questioning this order, several land owners had approached the High Court terming the DC's notification illegal as the lands were in no way owned by the Govt.

The lands have been gifted by the Mysore Maharajas to the family elders and the DC's B-Kharab orders violated the rights of the owners, the petitioners contended. Arguments have been heard and completed and Justice Sunil Dutt Yadav is expected to pronounce the verdict through video-conferencing at 5 pm.

Meanwhile, Krishnaraja MLA S.A. Ramdas has said that the High Court verdict on this issue will not have any bearing on the Government order to declassify the B–Kharab classification on over 205.09 acres of land in Kurubarahalli Survey No. 4, 105 acres of K.C. Layout and 44.20 acres of J.C. Layout (354.29 acres) under Alanahalli Survey Number 41. These lands will be freed from B-Kharab classification and will be handed over to Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) free of cost, the MLA said.

"Even if the High Court verdict comes in favour of the Government or the landowners who have got properties from the Mysore Wadiyars, it will have no impact on the other B-Kharab issue in Siddarthanagar, Kurubarahalli, K.C. Layout and J.C. Layout. No case is pending in the High Court regarding these lands and the Government can pass the order and transfer the land to MUDA as these layouts were formed during the administration of the earlier City Improvement Trust Board (CITB)," Ramdas said.

South West Monsoon active in Kodagu

Madikeri, June 19 (UNI)- South West Monsoon is becoming active in parts of Karnataka and Kodagu District has received 209 mm of rain since onset till June 17 and a minor landslide was reported in the District.

Kodagu Deputy Commissioner Annies Kanmani Joy said there is no need to panic since it was a minor incident and the rescue personnel have been camping at the site since morning and assessing the situation.

The District Control Room received a call about the landslide at Chamundeshwari Nagar in the town and the rescue team that rushed to the locality relocated five families to safety. Other residents of the area had been told to be on alert.

The same locality had witnessed a major landslide in the previous calamity, damaging a few houses and the residents of the entire locality were shifted to the relief centre. The area was sealed for many weeks as a precautionary measure.

Kodagu had received an average rainfall of 209 mm from May 25 to June 17 this year. Last year, in the same period, the district had recorded 186 mm rain and 801 mm in 2018. In this period, Bhagamandala and Virajpet had received an average of 337 mm and 350 mm rainfall respectively. In the last 24 hours, Bhagamandala recorded 107 mm rain, Napoklu 53.80 mm, Sampaje 60.60 mm, Hudikeri 51.40 mm and Virajpet 51.20 mm.

Postcard campaign against amendment to Land Reforms Act

Mysuru, June 19 (PM&SD)- Karnataka Rajya Hindulida Vargagala Jagruti Vedike, in association with Dalit Sangagala Okkoota, held a postcard campaign on Tuesday condemning the State Government's move to amend Land Reforms Act.

The activists, who gathered in front of MCC premises, posted letters to Chief Minister expressing their opposition. They alleged that CM Yediyurappa is making farmers lose their land by bringing in amendment to Land Reforms Act, which had been strengthened by former CM D. Devaraj Urs.

Pointing out that this would only help real estate agents and multinational companies to grab farmers' land to their own benefit, they urged the State Govt. to drop the proposed amendment.

Vedike President K.S. Shivaramu, Okkoota Convenor P. Raju and others were present.

CPI(M) demands financial aid to needy

Mysuru, June 19 (PM&SD)- Members of Mysuru District Unit of CPI-M (Communist Party of India-Marxist) staged a demonstration in front of the DC's office on Tuesday demanding financial aid of Rs. 7,500 per month to all poor families in the State, who are facing severe hardship due to lockdown.

Protesters alleged that the Central Government had imposed lockdown without proper planning, as a result of which poor are suffering hugely. They also demanded free distribution of 10 kg food grains per month for the next six months, extension of employment guarantee scheme to 200 days as well as to the urban areas and demanded unemployment allowance to be given to all unemployed persons in the region.

They also highlighted other issues and urged the Government to stop privatisation of public sector undertakings. Alleging that there is scarcity of medications as well as ventilators and other medical equipment in the State, the protestors demanded availability of sufficient equipment and medications for the patients and condemned the continuous rise in petrol and diesel prices.

CPM District Secretary K. Basavaraju, members L. Jagannath, Rajendra, Vijaykumar and others were present.

Minister distributes kits to Healthcare Workers, Home Guards and Newspaper Distributors

Mysuru, June 19 (MTY&SD)- District In-charge Minister S.T. Somashekar on Tuesday distributed grocery kits to healthcare workers, home guards and newspaper distributors, who have rendered service during testing time of Coronavirus pandemic.

At a function organised by the District Administration at Kalamandira in city, Somashekar symbolically distributed 100 grocery kits sponsored by Nanjangud-based Jubilant Generics.

Speaking on the occasion, MP Pratap Simha, while praising their hard work, said, "During lockdown period, even doctors were afraid to come out of their houses due to fear of getting infected, but brave healthcare workers have risked their lives to fight disease as frontline warriors. Similarly, home guards and newspaper distributors have rendered their services in the pandemic situation."

District In-charge Minister S.T. Somashekar and Deputy Commissioner Abhiram G. Sankar also lauded the efforts of these workers.

Forest Minister Anand Singh, MLA S.A. Ramdas, ZP CEO Prashant Mishra, ASP P.V. Sneha, District Health Officer Dr. R. Venkatesh, Kannada and Culture Assistant Director H. Chennappa and others were present.

Takes charge as Kodagu Labour Officer

Madikeri, June 19- Senior Officer Anil Bagati took charge as the new Labour Officer of Kodagu district here yesterday.

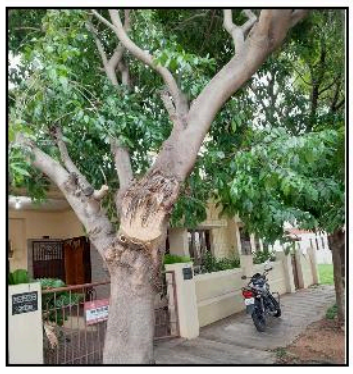
Bagati had earlier served in Belagavi for six years. Prior to that, he had served at Belur for six months as Senior Labour Inspector and 11 years as Labour Inspector at Badami, Vijayapura and Jamkhandi.

VOICE OF THE READER

Broken tree branch posing danger

Sir,

A huge branch of a tree in front of our house (#2464, 20th Main, Police Station Road, Vijayanagar 2nd Stage) is broken and may crash down any time.



I informed the City Corporation Control Room and Forest Department over phone. The Forest official asked me to submit a written letter and hand it over to the Forest Office. I am a senior citizen and unable to go over as directed by him.

Hence I am appealing to the authorities concerned to clear the tree branch before any mishap occurs.

— G. Laxman
Vijayanagar 2nd Stage
17.6.2020

SJCE-AIISH road crying for attention

Sir,

The road from Hunsur towards SJCE and AIISH Mysuru is in a pathetic condition so also most of the roads in this tourist city.

Due to uneven patchwork and also because of innumerable potholes which are visible almost everywhere, riding has become a nightmare for the motorists, especially two-wheelers.

On behalf of the travelling public, I request the authorities concerned to re-lay the entire stretch of the road and also other roads across the city before the onset of monsoon.

— Narayan Pandu Ranga Rao
Mysuru
17.6.2020

Domestic workers seek relief package

Mysuru, June 19 (MTY&SD)- Mysuru Gruha Karmikara Trade Union Sangha has urged the State Government to extend financial assistance to domestic helpers (maids/ servants) in view of Corona lockdown.

Addressing a press conference at Pathrakartara Bhavan in city on Tuesday, Sangha Hon. President Shobha said: "Thousands of domestic helpers in the region including Mysuru, Mandya and Chamarajanagar are facing a lot of financial crisis following the pandemic. In the month of March itself, they have been told by their employers not to come to work, as they visit multiple houses. Thousands of domestic helpers are dependent upon this income to run their families. Most of them are not even able to pay their rents and their employers have not offered any financial help."

Urging the State Government to announce a relief package to domestic workers, she said: "This crisis has made their lives miserable. The State Government has recently announced a lockdown relief package in which construction workers, drivers and others would get Rs. 5,000 each as a one-time relief. Similar measures should be taken for domestic servants as well."

Speaking on the occasion, Gruha Karmikara Sangha Secretary Chandramma said, "District administration has instructed domestic workers in unorganised sector to get smartcards. In Mysuru district, 1,250 domestic workers have applied for smartcard, but as of now, only 84 of them have received it. If there is such a delay in issuing smartcard, in what way it is going to help? Hence, the State Government should instruct the authorities concerned to issue smartcards without further delay."

Trade Union Convenor Nalini said, "A large section of domestic workers who are working in the unorganised sector are facing violence and aggression every day, but to due to fear of losing their job and shame, these cases never come to light. Government has decided to fix a minimum wage of Rs. 52 per hour for domestic workers. Even if a domestic worker works for three hours in a house, she will only get Rs. 700 to 800 per month. If they work for 8 hours a day, they should at least get Rs. 10,000 per month."

Mysuru Gruha Karmikara Trade Union Sangha office-bearers Girijamma & Mangala Gowri have urged the authorities to frame some guidelines for domestic workers in unorganised sector and demanded benefits such as annual leave, PF, weekly offs & monthly pension of Rs. 300.

MLC urges Govt. to permit aided institutions to fill up teacher vacancies

Mysuru, June 19 (SBD&DM)- MLC Marithibbegowda has urged the Government to permit aided educational institutions to fill up vacant teacher posts.

In a press release, Marithibbegowda, who represents South Teachers Constituency in the Legislative Council, said that he has submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa in this regard.

Pointing out that the Govt. had allowed aided educational institutions to fill up teacher posts lying vacant as on the year 2015, he said that now the Government has put on hold the permission, citing financial constraints in the wake of COVID crisis.

Marithibbegowda

Stating that the Education Department, taking note of the plight of lowly paid teachers in schools, had sent a proposal to the Government seeking permission for aided institutions to recruit teachers for filling up vacancies caused by retirement, death, resignation and such other reasons, he said that now the Finance Department has issued a circular mentioning that the permission for appointment has been withdrawn due to the economic crisis driven by COVID-19.

Maintaining that several teachers were working silently for years in aided institutions with the hope that they would get Government benefits in the near future, the MLC wanted the Finance Department to withdraw the circular and give permission for teacher recruitment in aided schools. He warned of staging a demonstration along with fellow MLCs if the Government ignored his plea.

MCC to provide plot near Rayanakere for pig rearing

Mysuru, June 19 (SBD&DM)- In a bid to address numerous complaints of pig menace in the city, the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) is planning to provide space to pig owners near Rayanakere in the outskirts of the city.

At a meeting of the MCC's Standing Committee on Health that took place at the old Council Hall of the MCC on Tuesday, many Corporators raised the issue of stray pig menace.

Committee Chairman Gopi said that land has been identified near Rayanakere on H.D. Kote Road for pig rearing.

Pointing out that many pig owners, who are fed up with paying fines for letting their pigs on to the roads, have also demanded an appropriate place for rearing, he said that the MCC, in a bid to end the stray pig menace, is planning to reserve space near Rayanakere exclusively for pig rearing. The MCC is the first Corporation in the State to come up with such a plan, he added.

Referring to shortage of hearse, Gopi said that at present, the MCC has four hearses, which are being used only in city limits. Noting that there is a demand for hearse from various other localities along the Ring Road that do not come under the MCC's purview, Gopi said that poor families would be under financial strain for hiring private vehicles to shift dead bodies to burial grounds and directed the officials to purchase two more hearse vehicles in order to cover more areas.

Committee Members Bhagya Mahadesh, Pandu and Shobha, Additional MCC Commissioner N.M. Shashikumar, Council Secretary Rangaswamy, Superintending Engineer Biligiri Rangaswamy, Health Officer Dr. Jayanth, Veterinary Officer Tirumalegowda and other officials were present at the meeting.

COVID-19 pandemic

Entry of devotees to Male Mahadeshwara Temple banned till June 21

Dr. Ravi

Chamarajanagar, June 19 (KS)- As part of the precautionary steps taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr. M.R. Ravi has banned the entry of devotees and public to Male Mahadeshwara Temple from today (June 19) till June 21.

Various rituals and special pujas were to take place attracting thousands of devotees to the temple and it would be very difficult to maintain the crowd. Hence, Sri Male Mahadeshwara Swamy Area Development Authority Secretary had written a letter requesting a ban on entry of devotees and public to the temple following which the DC issued the ban orders.

No prayers at Hazarath Mardan-e-Gaib Dargah till June 30

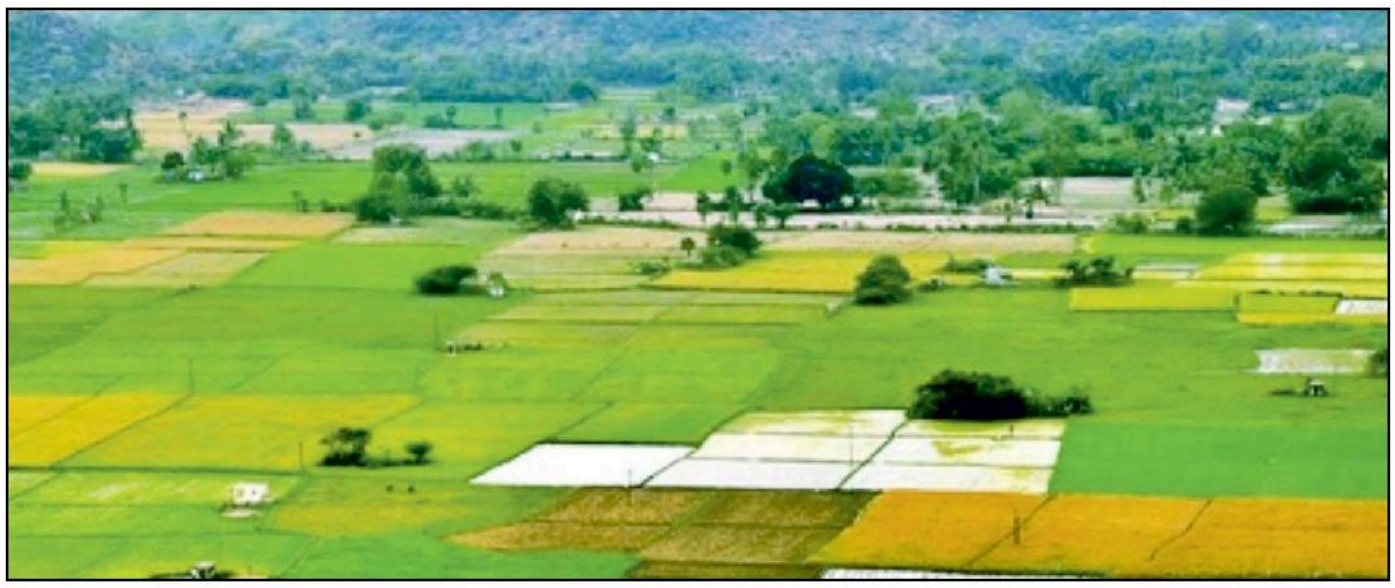
Hazarath Mardan-e-Gaib Dargah

Similarly, following a request to the DC from the District Wakf Administrative Committee's Administrative Officer and the President to ban prayers at Hazarath Mardan-e-Gaib Dargah in Shivanasamudra in view of the safety of the devotees, DC Dr. M.R. Ravi has banned prayers at the Dargah till June 30 or till further orders.

As many devotees from Bengaluru and various containment zones are visiting the Dargah to offer special prayers, the devotees are staying overnight by pitching tents and staying in houses around the Dargah. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, a request was made to the DC to ban special prayers and close the Dargah till June 30, following which the DC issued the ban orders.

Land Reforms will Change Socio-economic Landscape

By Girish Baga,
Athena Educational Services



Picture for representation only [Courtesy: Internet]

Agriculture is the sole source of livelihood in rural India. It not only puts money in the pockets of villagers but also feeds India. On March 19 this year, the Karnataka Government brought an amendment to Section 109 of the Karnataka Land Reforms Act 1961, which allows industries to sell agricultural land converted for industrial use after seven years.

The amendment looks to be in line with the promise made to investors in World Economic Forum held at Davos recently. Section 109 had restricted industries from selling agriculture land bought for industrial use. It required the land to be given back to the Government at zero cost in the event of failure of a firm or inability of a Corporation to carry on with the business.

Now, with this amendment, industries can buy and convert agricultural land for industrial use within 30 days. All an industrialist has to do is first purchase the agricultural land from the farmer. Then apply for conversion with the respective Deputy Commissioner (DC). If the DC does not raise any objection within 30 days after submission it is deemed approved and converted. This is a clear walk away from the practice of allotment through Government agencies like Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) etc.

The Government has also decided to amend State Land Reforms Act 1961 law that restricted non-farmers from buying agricultural land. Sections 63-A, 79-A, B and C under the Act will be repealed. With all these changes in the Sections, the ceiling on income of Rs. 25 lakh from non-agricultural source to purchase farmland will be eliminated. Any Indian individual, Trust, Society, Company or educational institution will be allowed to buy agricultural land.

The rationale behind these changes according to stakeholders are: One, to reduce already existing 12,000-odd cases registered in different courts pertaining to violation of this Act. In the last 45 years, about 83,000 cases have been registered for violation under the Act. Two, many say post-COVID-19, India stands a better chance as an alternative to China and these land reforms will increase our competitiveness. Three, earlier HNI's (High Net worth Individuals) in the State who wanted to get into farming were forced to buy agricultural land in neighbouring States as Karnataka had restrictions, now they can do it in Karnataka itself.

These changes could lead to large scale buying activity which could have significant implications in the years to come. One estimate says Karnataka has 98.95 lakh hectares of cultivable land out of which 22 lakh hectares are not under cultivation as of now. The 23% of fallow land will add to further conversion of agricultural landmass to different purposes other than agricultural activities. Is this a wise decision by the Government when pandemic like COVID-19 is teaching us to have food security and self-sufficiency?

It is not just about farmers, even real estate developers, who are already in deep crisis, may be severely affected with the sudden availability of large supply of converted land. The developers will bear the brunt in the next few months as the premium assigned to converted land will disappear with new land acquisition becoming relatively cheaper.

Now this raises a question whether any individual with a decent affordability would move to the city outskirts to own farmland

"One estimate says Karnataka has 98.95 lakh hectares of cultivable land out of which 22 lakh hectares are not under cultivation as of now. The 23% of fallow land will add to further conversion of agricultural landmass to different purposes other than agricultural activities. Is this a wise decision by the Government when pandemic like COVID is teaching us to have food security and self-sufficiency?"

with a house considering the same budget of owning a site or a house in the vicinity of any city? It will also be interesting to see how the Government will manage the land bank already held by KIADB or any other Urban Development Authority.

The recent ordinance on APMC Act which allows the farmers to sell their produce in the open market instead of APMC will further favour large Corporations which have for long nurtured an ambition to take part, actively and directly, in India's food supply chain. Now these Corporations can not only buy huge tracts of agricultural land in every district but also sell it in their retail stores or the open market. The rationale of the Government in this matter is that it creates a competitive market and better pricing for farmers' yield. But which farmer will hold the land, considering the predatory pricing offered to them by Corporations to buy their land?

What will happen to poor farmers who will be displaced and eventually become labourers on their own land? The country has 95% marginal farmers with less than 1-2 acres of land-holding. The repercussions on a long run look alarming considering the large population of farmers.

We have seen the migrant workers' problem during the pandemic. Who are these migrant labourers? They are from villages. According to 2011 census, there are more than 6.5 crore migrant labourers in the cities of India and 99% of them are displaced and deprived farmers from different parts of the country.

Now we have to introspect whether it should be seen as an opportunity for the farmers to get better price for their land or has this pandemic made our Government explore a new revenue stream at the cost of poor and helpless farmers? The Government also seems to be inclined to take the ordinance route without any debate in the Assembly to pass these amendments. This short-term benefit will have serious consequences in the long run, which could affect the Socio-economic eco-system of our State.

Amendments to Land Reforms Act: Farmers to block Mysuru-Bengaluru Highway tomorrow

Mysuru, June 19 (MTY&KS)- Condemning the amendments made to Land Reforms Act and orders being made to implement by the State Government, the farmers will be staging a nationwide protest by blocking Highways on June 20, said Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha District President Vidyasagar T. Ramegowda in a press meet here recently.

Stating that both the Central and State Governments were uprooting the farming community and the agriculture sector by making amendments to Land Reforms Act, APMC Act and HOPCOMS Act and also making changes to various rules and regulations, Vidyasagar said that the Government was pledging the agriculture sector to corporate companies. He further said that the farmers of the region would be staging a protest tomorrow at 11.30 am by blocking the Mysuru-Bengaluru Highway, near Columbia Asia Hospital.

Alleging that the Govt. has removed 79A and B columns which were the life of the Land Reforms Act, Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha Convenor N. Nanjegowda alleged that any rich person can now buy agricultural land and utilise it for any purpose which could lead to food scarcity in the nation. He urged for the co-operation of the public in the interest of farmers.

Saragur Taluk President Naganna, District Convenor Mahadevu, T. Narasipur Taluk President Pradeep, Press Secretary Manju Kiran, S. Raghu Himmavu and others were present at the press meet.

Private Hospitals can treat COVID-19 patients: Govt.

Bengaluru, June 19 (KMS & BCT)- Karnataka will rope in Private Hospitals to treat COVID-19 patients. "Only Government Hospitals were being utilised to treat patients till now and going forward Private Hospitals will also be utilised to treat patients," said Medical Education Minister Dr. K. Sudhakar.

He warned that strict action would be initiated against Private Hospitals that refuse to admit Coronavirus patients. Karnataka is one of the few States in the country that has so far treated all COVID patients in its own State-run facilities and allowed private participation only for observation of suspected people or for keeping them in isolation.

The decision to include private medical establishments in COVID-19 treatment comes as the State witnessed a surge in positive cases, especially at its capital Bengaluru. The more worrying part is that the number of people, without inter-State travel history, testing positive indicates a spread of the virus in the community.

Task Force halves cost of testing in Private Hospitals for people referred by Government Hospitals

Dr. K. Sudhakar

B. Sriramulu

Cost of testing

Yesterday, the COVID-19 Task Force decided to halve the cost of testing in Private Hospitals for people referred by Government Hospitals. It has also put a cap on the room rent and treatment cost of the patients referred by any Government Hospital. A decision in this regard was taken at the Task Force meeting headed by Health Minister B. Sriramulu yesterday. As per the decision, the cost of COVID test in a Private Hospital will be Rs. 2,600 for people referred by a Government Hospital while it would be Rs. 4,500 if one goes directly.

As per the decision of the Task Force, a Government Hospital-referred patient will be charged Rs. 5,200 per day if admitted to the general ward. Charges will be Rs. 7,500 per day if there is a need for oxygen support. For an isolation ward, the cost is fixed at Rs. 8,500 per day while it would be Rs. 12,000 per day for an ICU with a ventilator.

The Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association (PHANA) had proposed to treat BPL patients for a price of Rs. 5,200-Rs. 10,000 a day depending on the severity of the case. For other patients covered under private health insurance scheme or those paying from their pockets, the hospitalisation cost per day varies from Rs. 15,000-Rs. 33,000 depending on the nature of treatment required, as per the indicative prices suggested by the Association of Healthcare Providers-India (AHPI) and PHANA.

All Private Hospitals have been told to reserve 50 percent of their beds for treating COVID patients. Besides that, they have been advised to follow treatment protocols as per Central Government guidelines.

ILI and SARI cases

The Task Force has also directed Private Hospitals to continue treatment of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) patients even after they test positive for COVID-19 if the facilities are equipped to handle it.

The Government has further directed the Private Hospitals to notify the Health Department about all SARI and ILI cases they are treating. The Hospitals must notify the health authorities about the cases they continue to treat after they are found positive for COVID-19.

Mysore Varsity to appeal for allowing continuation of Distance Education: VC

Mysuru, June 19 (RKB&DM)- University of Mysore (UoM) Vice-Chancellor Prof. G. Hemantha Kumar said that the University will appeal to the State Government to give permission for continuing the existing Distance Education courses run by it.

Presiding over the University's Academic Council meeting at Vijnana Bhavan in Manasagangothri yesterday, Prof. Hemantha Kumar said that the State Government has directed the UoM to stop fresh admission for Distance Education courses and to complete the academic curriculum of only the students who are currently enrolled for such courses.

"Kuvempu University has already appealed the State Government to reconsider its order. We too will explain our same stance to the Govt.," he said.

Pointing out that UoM will bring to the notice of the Government that it is not running courses other than those authorised by the UGC, he said that if the Government does not allow continuance of Distance Education courses, then the University's Directorate of Correspondence Education will think of converting all its courses into online courses.

Online courses to be re-started

Stating that online courses were halted following a UGC direction, Prof. Hemantha Kumar said that the UGC has been again sent a proposal for re-start of online courses and it is hoped that the UGC will give permission.

Noting that UoM stands 27th in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), he said the UGC has said that such Universities which are ranked within 100, need not have to take its permission for offering online classes.

Underlining the benefits of online courses, the Vice-Chancellor said that the University's online courses, if introduced, will reach out to thousands of students across the globe and will also help the University in generating more revenue.

The other major decisions taken at the Council meeting included sending a proposal to the Government for seeking re-introduction of M.Phil courses with some changes in rules, reduction of MCA course duration from the existing 3 years to 2 years with introduction of new syllabus, setting up of an Endowment Lecture Series in the name of Prof. Y.S. Siddegowda in Social Work Department, extension of autonomous status to nine Colleges for a period of one more academic year and granting of autonomy for one more College.

The nine Colleges that gets extension of autonomy are: Maharani's Science College for Women, JSS Arts, Science and Commerce College, JSS Women's College, Saraswathipuram, SBRR Mahajana First Grade College, St.Philomena's College, Bannimantap, Government First Grade College for Men, Mandya, Government First Grade College for Women, Mandya, Government Arts and Science College and Post-Graduate Centre, Hassan and Hassan Government Science College. Also, Bharathi College at K.M. Doddi in Maddur Taluk will be granted autonomy.

The Academic Council also decided to hold separate exams in inevitable circumstances for students who are part of NCC, NSS and sporting activities and to fill up teaching posts in the University through Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA).

Registrar Prof. R. Shivappa and members of the Academic Council attended the meeting.

Five-year-old girl tests positive in Mysuru

Mysuru, June 19 (Mahesh &BCT)- Mysuru reported two COVID-19 positive cases yesterday (June 18). With two fresh cases, the total number of positive cases has increased to 123 in Mysuru district.

Among the infected are a five-year-old girl and a 39-year-old woman who returned from Maharashtra. Six patients have been discharged from the designated COVID Hospital yesterday and the total number of active cases stands at 11 now. In all, the total number of patients who have been discharged are 112.

The five-year-old girl (P-7769) hails from Penjahalli in Hanagodu near Hunsur and the Maharashtra returnee woman (P-7770) is a resident of Mysuru Taluk. Seven-month pregnant woman (P-4219) had returned from Maharashtra with special permission and she was asked to be in home quarantine at Penjahalli in Hanagodu. She was tested positive on June 4.

Now, P-4219's five-year-old daughter tested positive and has been shifted to the Mysuru COVID Hospital. Also the 39-year-old woman from Mysuru Taluk was in facility quarantine where she was tested positive. Both the young girl and the woman were in quarantine and as such, there is no danger of them spreading the disease to others, said Health Department Officers.

Selected for Yoga Nakshtra Award

Hirannaiah Venkatesh Ashadevi Harish Vinayak

Mysuru, June 19- On the occasion of International Yoga Day, Mysuru GSS Yoga in association with Mysuru Yoga Balaga will be conferring 'Yoga Nakshtra Award' to notable yoga practitioners at J Patrakartara Bhavana in city tomorrow (June 20) at 11 am. The award will be presented to H.G. Hirannaiah, G. Venkatesh, N. Ashadevi, S. Harish and Vinayak Honnavara.

Senior Social Worker Dr. K. Raghuram Vajpayee, MDJA President C.K. Mahendra, President of GSS Yoga Pratishtana Srihari, former President of District Kannada Sahitya Parishat at Maddikere Gopal, President of Mysuru Yoga Association Dr. C. Ramesh Shetty, Vice- President Yogaprakash and Founder of Srinath With Yoga Dr. B. Srinath will be the chief guests, according to a press release from Convenors of Mysuru Yoga Balaga N. Anantha and M.V. Nagendrababu.

Scheduled programme postponed at 11th hour

Despite COVID, netas miffed at not being invited

Mysuru, June 19 (RK&BCT)- The programme to launch the project to supply door-to-door drinking water and to levy pending water tax through Digitalised Point of Sale equipment and also inaugurate the new office section of Vani Vilas Water Works Executive Engineer was fixed at 12 noon today (June 19). But the event had to be cancelled and postponed as some of the elected representatives were miffed at not being invited.

Invitations had been sent out and the guests were informed. The official machinery had kept everything ready like garlands, bouquets and had even arranged for sweetmeat. As the event was to be held at 12 noon, a grand lunch too was arranged.

But just hours before the event was to start, some elected representatives and their supporters called up the officials and asked why they were not invited for the event. Though there is a general restriction on the events due to COVID where everyone is expected to maintain social distancing, the netas were angry that they were ignored. Officials on condition of anonymity told *SOM* that just because a few political leaders were not invited to the event, the entire programme was cancelled and postponed to a later date. All the arrangements went waste, they rued.

Water tax collection vehicles

Desperate to mop up revenues in COVID times, the MCC has purchased two vehicles exclusively to collect pending water tax dues that stands at a whopping Rs. 180 crore. Named Cauvery and Kabini, these vehicles are equipped with Point of Sale machines so that water tax can be collected and receipts issued on the spot.

Each vehicle can carry eight persons from the Vani Vilas Water Works and if the dues are pending since a long time, such connections will be disconnected. A defaulter list has been prepared and armed with the list, the vehicles will land at doorsteps of citizens to collect dues.

There are over 1,70,000 legal water connections in Mysuru city and about 15,000 illegal connections. Of the Rs. 180 crore pending water tax money, Rs. 46 crore is the interest on the dues and Rs. 40 crore is pending water tax dues from many Government institutions.

Officials told *Star of Mysore*' that along with collecting the pending dues, they will install metres for illegal water connections and bring them into the legal bracket. Each water metre costs Rs. 1,500 and a budget of Rs. 2 crore has been sanctioned by the MCC to regularise all the illegal connections.

Private Schools urge Minister to waive off taxes

Bengaluru, June 19- In the wake of COVID-19 lockdown, Private Schools have urged the Government to waive off all taxes payable by them.

Mysuru Region Private Educational Institutions President Sudhakar S. Shetty met Revenue Minister R. Ashok at Bengaluru recently and submitted a memorandum seeking waiver of power bills, property tax and road tax on School vehicles.

Arguing that private educational Institutions located in Mysuru, Mandya, Hassan, Chamarajanagar and Kodagu districts are facing a lot of problems and are unable to pay taxes, Sudhakar Shetty appealed the Government to come to the rescue of schools at this critical juncture by waiving off taxes.

Stating that the Government which has banned online education on one hand is allowing foreign online Apps such as Baiju and Kedopia on the other, he expressed concern that this attitude of the Government was severely hurting the prospects of educational institutions of the State. The Minister assured that the Government will consider the plea of Schools and take appropriate action.

Cancel holidays on Jayantis

(Continued from page 1)

Higher Education Minister Dr. Ashwath Narayan said that the decision on cancelling holidays on Jayantis has to be taken by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. Moreover, to bring education back on track during the present COVID-19 pandemic situation, Prof. Doreswamy has made a few suggestions to complete exams of final semester engineering and graduate students.

He also said that it was a challenge for the education sector to overcome the pandemic crisis and structure the next academic year 2021-22.

He advised implementation of a mentoring system in all higher education institutions in Karnataka and empowering specially-abled students.

Awareness created on Swadeshi apps

Tributes paid to Galwan Valley martyrs

RJ Avinash of 92.7 Big FM paid respects to soldiers who have been martyred during the violent face-off with the Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on Monday night, at a programme held in front of Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple yesterday. On the occasion, awareness was created about Chinese apps and Indian apps; Also, people were asked to use only Swadeshi apps. Suma Rajkumar, Aryan of Gandhadagudi Foundation and Dr. Renuka Prasad were present on the occasion.

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